

319 Phineas

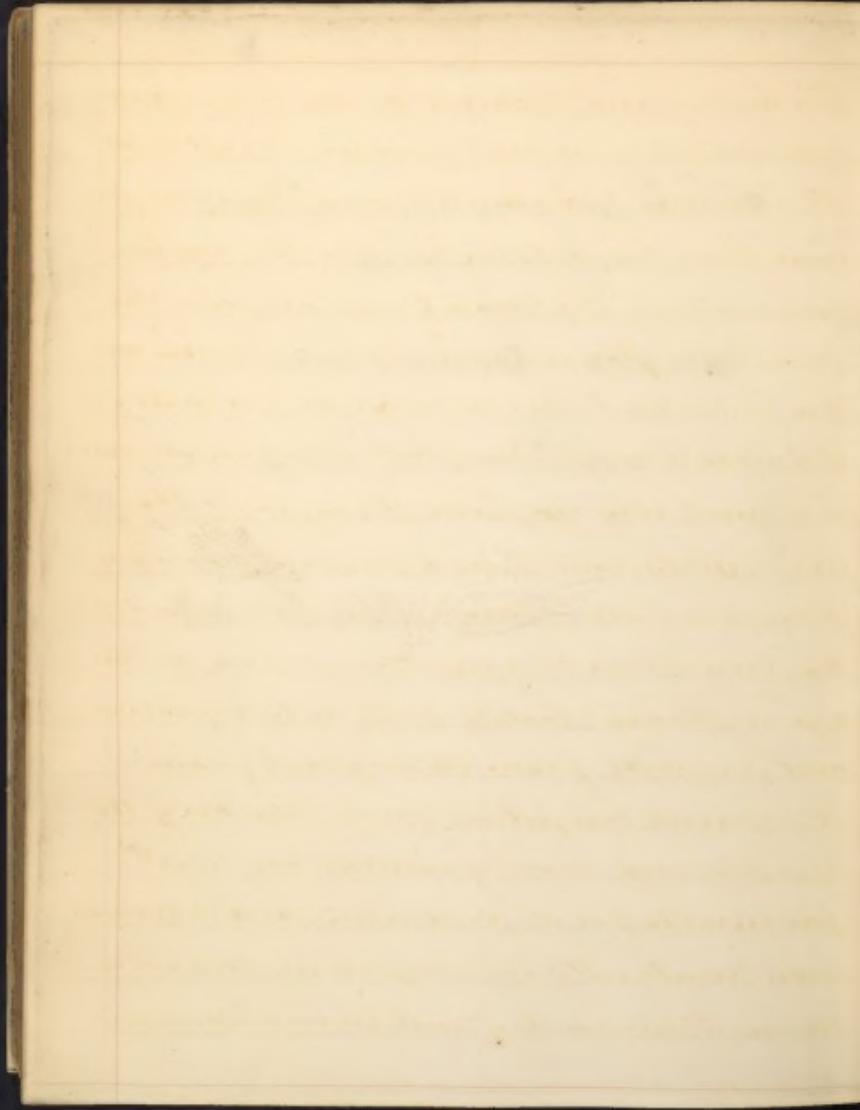
C. 167

An Essay on the medical  
Properties.  
of  
Secale Cornutum  
by  
Manuel Pyre Robinson

Dated March 23<sup>rd</sup> 1826

Widderwelt war ja sehr  
ausgezogen  
wurde und  
den Tag nicht mehr

the body and fingers were very  
and untiring power of action, but it was  
the attention of Attention and Attention  
was then being turned to the  
construction of the church. There were  
flocks of pigeons and many birds  
were invited to our meetings. The house  
of Congress was also built. The ground  
was about one-half mile long and  
one-half mile wide. It was a community  
of the provinces of Long and the provinces  
the construction of a meeting house  
was differing greatly with each other  
and greatly from the original plan.  
A small building was the only  
one for use and a much smaller  
house for the people to go into  
and a plenty of room for every thing, and  
there was a large room for the people to go into



The history and properties of this very singular and interesting product of nature, has attracted the attention of Naturalists and Physicians for more than two centuries; but for the regular introduction of the Scale Cornutum into the practice of Physic and Materia Medica we are indebted to our countryman Dr Stearns of Oneida County New York. It is found growing in almost every rye field throughout the United States and more abundantly in many of the provinces of Europe. This substance is the production of a peculiar disease of the rye differing widely both as to appearance and property from its original grain. It is found projecting from the ear of the rye. Low and moist grounds are most favourable for its production and it abounds more plentifully in very rainy and cold seasons, than in dry and warm. The disease



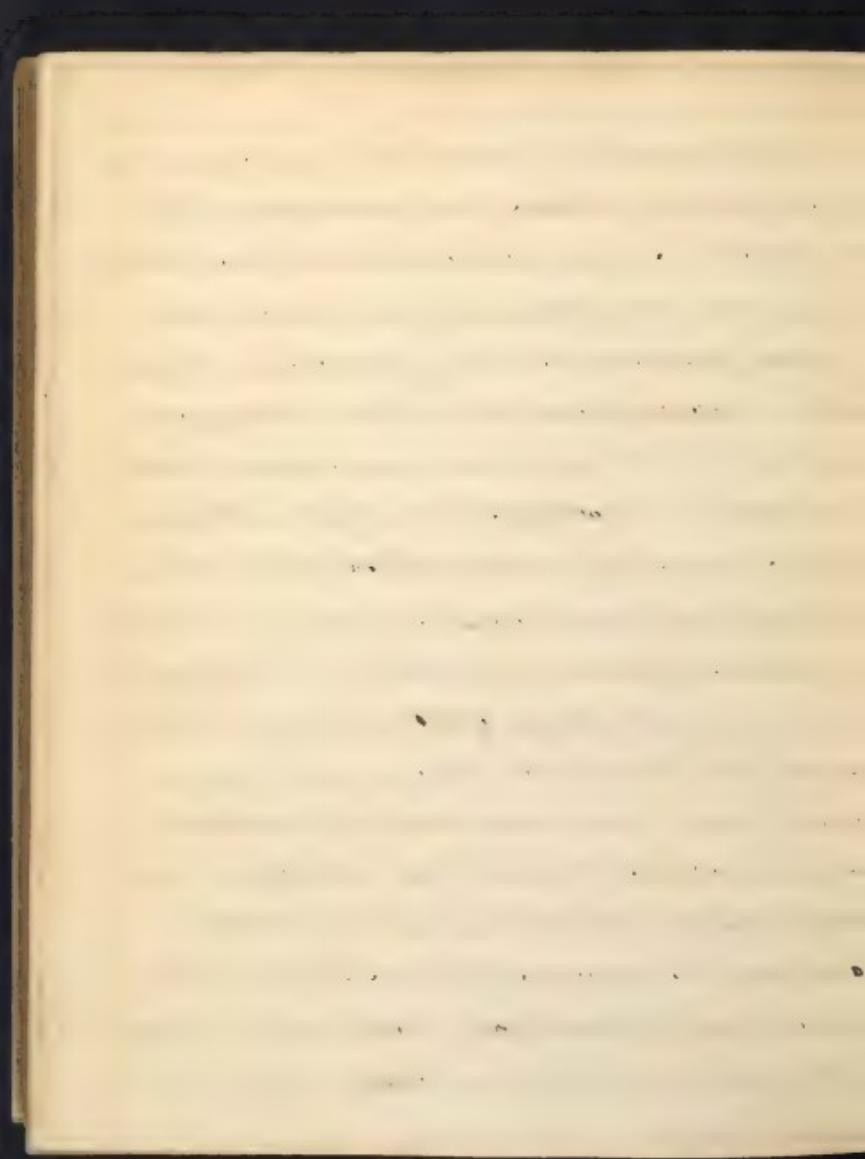
rye is of a purplish brown colour externally  
but internally white, it resembles in shape a  
cock's spur, from whence it derives the name -  
Argot from the French. It differs in length  
from one fourth to one and a half or even  
two inches, and is flattened on each side +  
with a furrow or fissure running from  
one extremity to the other, its taste is acrid  
and pungent. On the continent of Europe  
and particularly France where it prevails  
extensively it has been productive of many  
epidemic diseases, especially the dry gangrene,  
spreading pestilence throughout vast districts  
of country; it is reported that in the year  
1709 at the Hospital of Orleans in France five  
hundred patients were asphyxiated by disease  
in consequence of eating bread impregnated  
with the spurred rye. In the state of New  
Jersey in this country where much rye



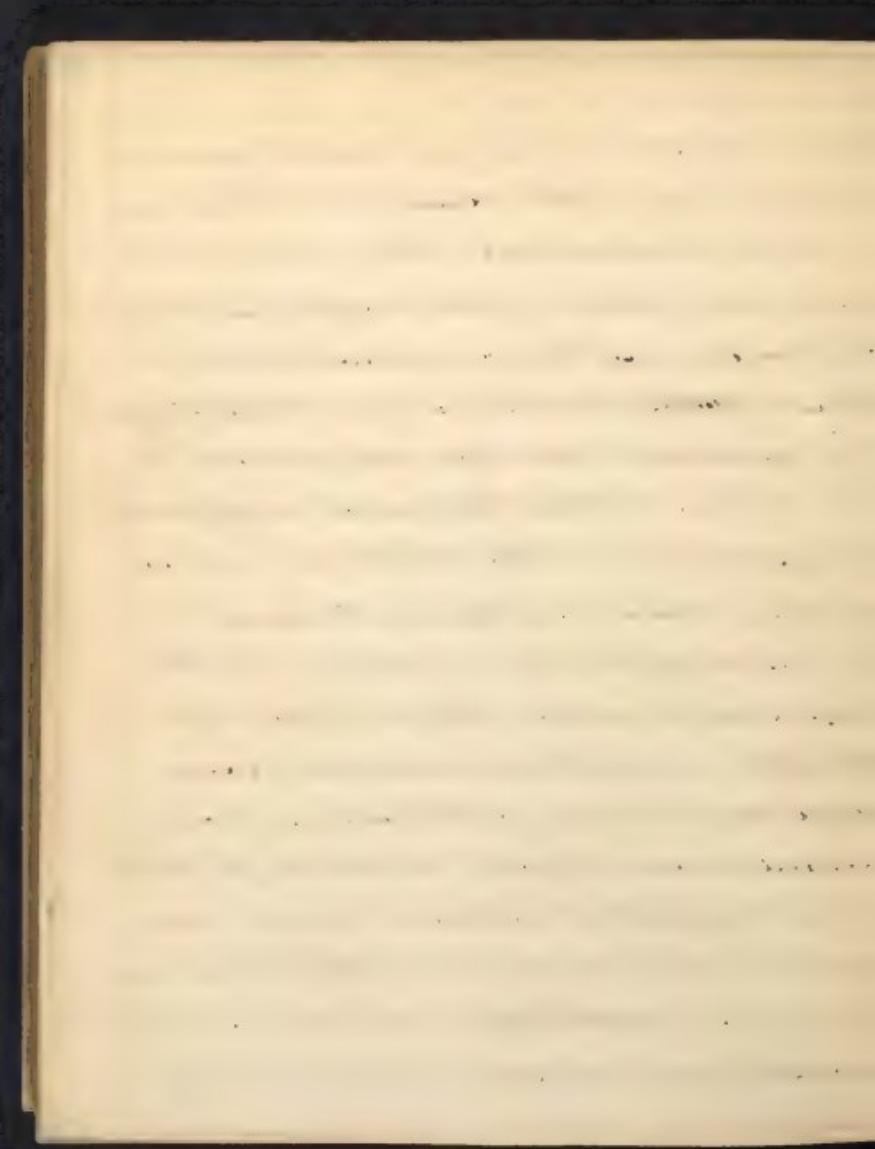
bread is consumed; several cases of gangrene  
are attributed to the undue presence of the  
Ergot in the rye, - By Dr Howell, see Philadel-  
phia Med. and phys. Jour Nov. No... 1825.  
Although this article in large quantities is  
poisonous, it is no argument against its  
use in proper doses, for all poisons when  
properly regulated as regards quantity  
become medicinal — The ergot acts with  
great certainty, and wonderful rapidity  
on the impregnated uterus, hence it is  
of great use in the treatment of parturient  
women. It has been asserted by some  
writers on this subject that its effects  
on the impregnated uterus, is not certain,  
but they I am inclined to doubt, the cases  
in which it has failed to produce an  
effect are to be attributed to the practitioner  
neglecting to reduce vascular action before

the author's name is lost, and  
the title of the book is also unknown.  
The book is bound in red leather  
with gold tooling on the spine and  
the front cover. The back cover  
is plain. The book is in good  
condition, though the leather  
is worn at the edges and corners.  
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its employment. It is used in pregnancy previou  
sly and during labour. It is advantageously  
employed in puerperal convulsions which  
require a speedy delivery. Ergot proves also  
of great service in cases of abortion attended  
with weak contractions of the uterus, and  
much flooding; and when ever there  
is much hemorrhage from the uterus,  
from want of contraction, also when  
labour has been lingering and protracted  
on account of debility. It is eminently useful  
in cases of flooding after delivery and to  
expel the placenta after an undue reten  
tion. It has been said that it would be  
good practice to employ the ergot in  
every case of feet or knees presentation  
to avoid the danger of compressing the  
shard and to facilitate the speedy delivery  
of the child. D'Physick has cured an



obstinate case of painful menstruation  
by the use of this drug. It also has been  
used in amenorrhœa. When we wish to  
expel the fetus by the employment of  
this medicine, there are some rules to be  
strictly ~~attended~~ attended to before its exhibition,  
viz we should ascertain the position of  
the child. Whether the pelvis is sufficiently  
large to permit the child to pass, or  
if any other impediment exists.—  
There should be a recession of the  
natural mucus, the os uteri soft  
dilated or dilatable and the pains  
and contractions of the uterus have  
ceased, or are so feeble as not to be suffi-  
cient to expel the child. We should never  
exhibit it when the strength of the woman  
is much exhausted, for it acts in such  
a continued manner she might die.

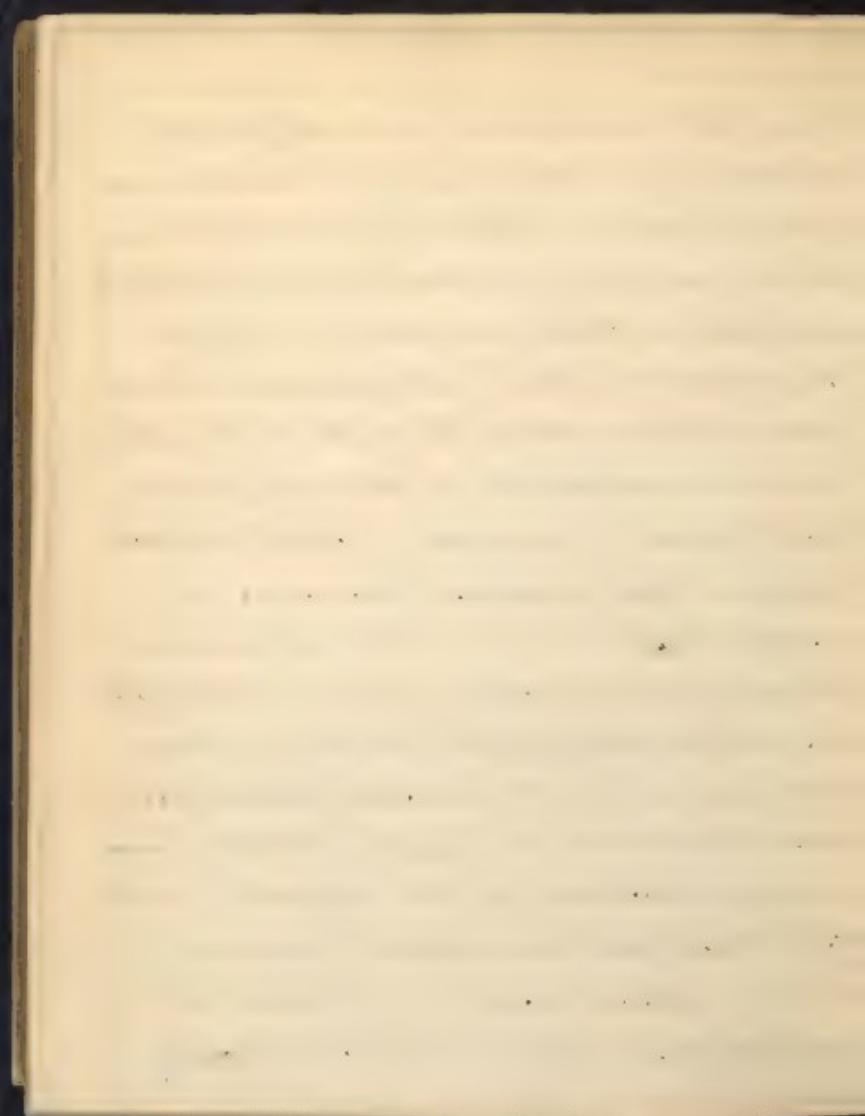


under its effects. Ergot may be given in powder or decoction; in powder the dose is from twenty to thirty grains, but I think the best form to administer it in pregnancy is the decoction, half an ounce boiled slowly for fifteen minutes in a pint of water - dose a wine glass full every ten minutes pro re nata. The symptoms it produces are almost immediate. They manifest an augmented sensibility, the pain, increase in force and frequency and in almost every case suffer but small intermissions until delivery is accomplished. Some practitioners, and especially the continental ones will not use this substance in pregnancy under a false opinion that it inevitably or nearly so produces the death of the child. To prove the contrary of this when properly and cautiously administered we

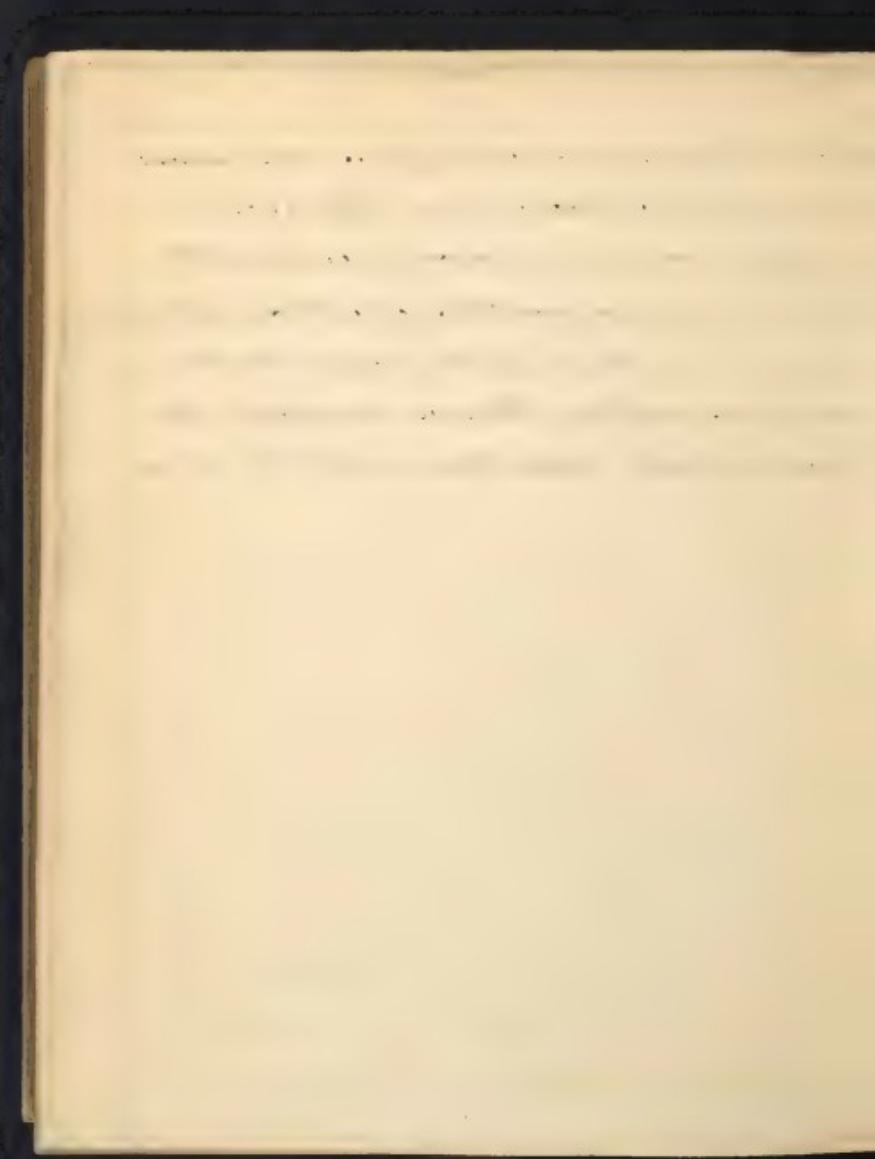


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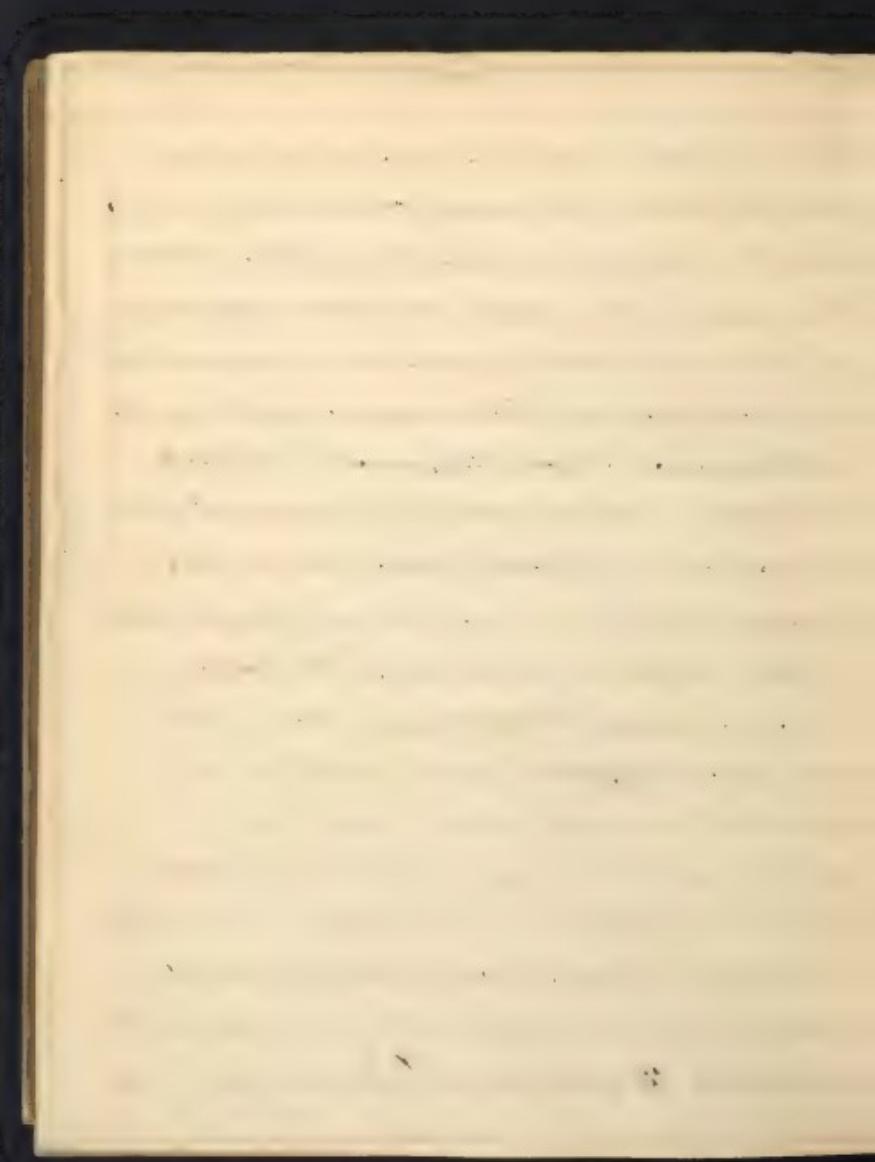
have the abundant and satisfactory  
evidence of many highly respectable and  
able Physicians, the danger to the child  
arises from its premature and ill timed  
exhibition. The manner in which  
ergot acts on the impregnated uterus,  
has led to some dispute and adds  
another example of the conjecture  
and doubt of medical Philosophers as  
regards the modus operandi of  
medicines. In its rapid and immediate  
action, the advocates of sympathy find  
an additional confirmation of their  
doctrine while the humoral pathologists  
are obliged to summon all their aid  
in explanation of the singular pro-  
perty of this new medicine. I among  
many others have seen cases in  
which this medicine had scarcely



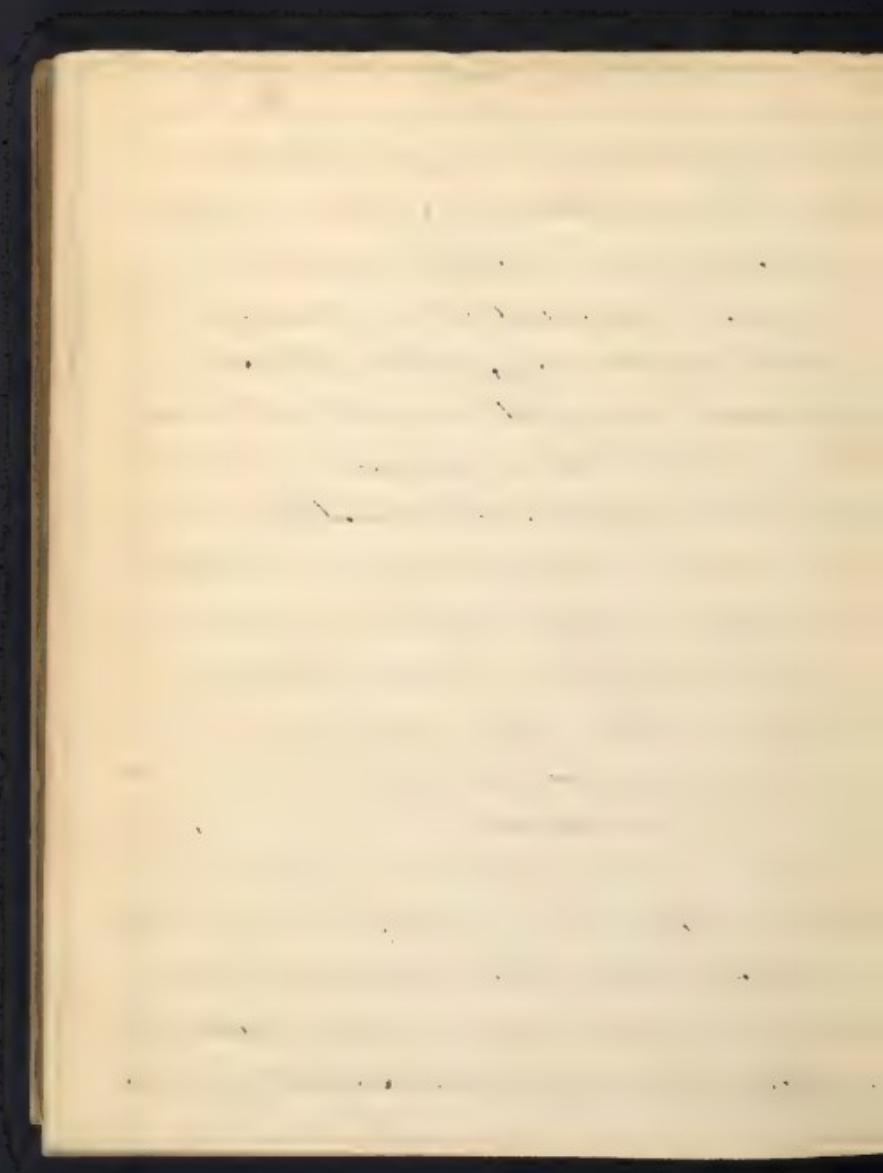
reached the stomach when the most violent contractions of the uterus were produced showing evidently that it was a matter of utter impossibility for it to pass through the lacteal and lymphatic, thence through the blood vessels and thus affect the uterus.



It is not only on the impregnated  
uterus, that the siccate cornutum displays  
so such happy, and useful effects. I believe  
it is one of the most valuable medicines  
in the materia medica in curing those  
regular agues, which occur during the  
autumnal months, and I think  
relapses are much less frequent after  
its exhibition than from the usual  
remedies. The use of it in this disease  
is not original with me, Dr Baker of  
Wilmington, Delaware, is the first  
who employed it and with the  
greatest success; and his opinion  
of its utility is fully confirmed  
by Dr Dutton of Delaware County,  
Pennsylvania, who published an  
account of it in the 8th volume of the  
Medical Recorder = As soon as I was



apprised of the discovery, I took some  
pains to ascertain the fact by expe-  
riment, and am fully convinced of  
its value. I have used it in several cases  
I might say many; with almost  
universal success. In most instances  
it has acted like a charm and com-  
pletely delirroned, the disease. There are  
some cases, in which it is inadmissible  
especially with females in a state of  
pregnancy = Before its exhibition we  
should prepare the system for its  
reception by evacuating the alimenta-  
ry canal by some active cathartie, or  
emetic, so as to free the system of  
the accumulations of bile or any other  
exciting cause; that nothing shall  
remain to keep up the periodical  
exacerbations except the habit acquired



by the system; it is in breaking up  
this chain of morbid action that  
the eryot displays its singular  
power, and efficacy. If vascular action  
or inflammatory diathesis is great, then  
bloodletting must be resorted to;  
there should be a complete apyrexia  
and in fine, where ever bark would  
be proper we may use the secale  
cornutum. The average dose for  
an adult afflicted with intermit-  
tent fever is thirty, or forty grains,  
divided into three powders, the  
first to be given two or three hours  
before the paroxysm makes its appear-  
ance and let the last be taken  
as soon as the first symptom of  
the expected chill makes its  
appearance. If the first trial of it

the originality of the authorship  
and value of the book. I have  
not yet had time to go through it  
but I will do so as soon as I can.  
I will write you again and tell  
you more about it. I am very  
interested in your reading of the  
book and would like to know  
what you think of it. I hope you  
will let me know what you think  
of it. I will write you again as soon  
as I have time to go through it.

does not succeed, we must resort to it again at the next expected period, and <sup>make use of</sup> the same dose; It is sometimes advantageously combined with cream of Tartar, or magnesia, and where much instability of the stomach prevails some aromatic tincture or essential oil may be combined with it, vomiting may sometimes occur though not desirable, yet I have frequently observed the salutary power of the ergot when it has produced this effect.

Nest houses being very numerous  
and variously placed, the river  
windings intervening, ~~they~~  
nest ~~houses~~ ~~houses~~ ~~houses~~ ~~houses~~  
~~houses~~ ~~houses~~ ~~houses~~ ~~houses~~  
~~houses~~ ~~houses~~ ~~houses~~ ~~houses~~  
~~houses~~ ~~houses~~ ~~houses~~ ~~houses~~  
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